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## DOCUMENTS

### THE FIRST EPISCOPAL VISITATION IN THE UNITED STATES<sup>1</sup> (1606)

A. G. I. 54-3-1 *Simancas, Ecclesiastico, Audiencia de Santo Domingo.—Cartas y expedientes de los obispos de la isla de Cuba vistos en el consejo desde el año de 1539 á 1674*

*Carta del obispo de cuba para su magestad en su real consejo.—Florida a su magestad.*

. . . —1606.—*El obispo de Cuba 24 de Junio.—En 21 de febrero 1607.—*

*Vista y decretada dentro. Obispo de Cuba.*

#### 1. *Ysla de Cuba.*

Hacimiento de gracias por auer imbiado su magestad armada real para ebitar los resgates por ser el medio vnico para este efecto. *No ay que responder.*

Señor: Ante todas cosas no puedo dexar de dar a vuestra magestad muchas gracias e infinitas a la magestad diuina que puso en corazon a vuestra magestad de que nos hiciese tanta merced de mandar ahuyentar con su poderosa mano a los crexes piratas enemigos de dios nuestro señor y de vuestra magestad que tan ocupadas han tenido todas estas costas puertos y nauegaciones procurando Señorearse de todos los puertos y pasos pues segun me an informado y escrito a imbiado vuestra magestad Armada Real para el efecto. La qual no habra dexado de tener buena marcha como yo espero y deseo porque al fin Dios es justo y a de voluer por esta causa por ser suya propia.

Muchas son y muy grandes las obligaciones que los capellanes de vuestra magestad tenemos de encomendar a Dios a vuestra magestad cada dia en nuestros sacrificios y oraciones como de hecho lo haçemos yo y todo el clero en este obispado pero este beneficio tan universal en estas partes es tan grande que el solo bastaba por total Causa aunque no ubiera otra desta antigua obligacion porque a vuestra magestad çertifico que con este remedio de limpiar con armada real estas yndias y costas dellas que es El unico y no ay otro se habran redimido muchas vidas restauradose muchas haziendas y estorbadosse a muchos el camino del ynfierno porque este mal trato de los resgates todos estos daños y otros muchos acarrea, Lo qual todo agora çesara sin duda ninguna.

#### 2 F. *Prouincias de la florida.*

Da parte el obispo a vuestra magestad de su venida a las Prouincias de la florida y como escriuio luego que lleço a sant agustin por via de la habana y el motibo que tubo de açelerar su venida y del buen reçeumiento que le hizo el gouernador çiudad y presidio.

Por uia de la Habana en un nauio que de aqui fue aquel puerto y entiendo alcansaria la flota escreui a vuestra magestad mi venida a estas Prouincias luego que aqui lleçe que fue mediado el mes de março por quaresma y la causa de auer açelerado mi venida dejando algunas cosas a que acudir de la obligacion de mi oficio y en particular el sinodo Prouincial que tenia echado para Sancti Spiritus Lugar ques esta en el riñon de la isla de cuba de que tanta neçesidad

<sup>1</sup>The editors of the CATHOLIC HISTORICAL REVIEW beg to acknowledge the courtesy of Dr. J. Franklin Jameson, editor of the *American Historical Review*, who sent them this document for publication. The translation has been made by the Rev. V. F. O'Daniel, O.P., whose article on Bishop Cabezas will be found in this issue.

tiene todo este obispado respecto de no se auer jamas hecho en el dicho sinodo que a sido causa de no auer modo de uiuir ni reforma de vida y costumbres ansi en los eclesiasticos como en los seglares por falta de constituciones Sinodales que son la regla de bien viuir en lo que toca a lo espiritual y en las cosas a los espiritual anejas. dando cuenta juntamente de la puntualidad que tuuo el gouernador y capitan general por vuestra magestad Pedro de Ybarra en cumplir de su parte y mandar se hiciese lo mesmo de parte desta çiudad y presidio como en todo y por todo se ha hecho muy cunplidamente la real cedula que conmigo traxe por la qual vuestra magestad manda sea reçeuido en estas Prouinçias como perlado dellas y que para el exerçio y la execucion de mi ofio se me de todo el favor y ayuda neçesario.

### 3. Florida.

Pide el obispo que vuestra magestad mande ver su visita en su real consejo.

sido los gastos los peligros y quiebras de salud que en razon desto he tenido justo sera que a vuestra magestad le conste pues esto tendra en esta vida por premio de los pasados y de los que espero tener adelante en la vuelta esperando sobre todo el premio del señor en la otra vida.

### 4. Florida.

Da noticia el obispo a su magestad de como se le mostro la cedula real para entra la tierra adentro y en virtud della le fue pedido se hallase en la entrada.

En lo tocante a mi visita y ofio no E perdido tiempo como vuestra magestad vera por el testimonio que ba con esta al qual me remito Suplicando a vuestra magestad sea seruido de mandarlo ver en su real consejo que conforme los trabajos an

Aqui me mostro el gouernador por vuestra magestad Pedro de Ybarra una cedula real por la qual vuestra magestad le da lizenzia para hazer una entrada que pretende La tierra adentro y en razon de encargarle vuestra magestad que los indios no reçiban detrimento y sean bien tratados me ha pedido Le aconpañe en esta jornada para que en este particular pueda dar mejor relacion

del entero cunplimiento de lo que vuestra magestad le manda y juntamente para çertificar a vuestra magestad de la neçesidad que podria auer de obreros hecho el descubrimiento desta viña del Señor que se pretende.

### 5. Florida.

Trata el obispo que conuiene haga la jornada en estas prouinçias pretensa Pedro de Ybarra gouernador y capitan general por vuestra magestad porque no se dilate lo uno y lo otro por estar ynformado de lo que ay la tierra adentro el dicho Pedro de ybarra y ser neçesario para la entrada la practica y experiençia en la soldadesca alegando lo que en razon desto a oydo en sant agustin.

De la persona de quien vuestra magestad a echado mano para hazer esta entrada que es el sobredicho Pedro de ybarra gouernador y capitan general por vuestra magestad en estas Prouinçias puedo dezir y çertificar a vuestra magestad que a sido muy asertada la eleccion de su persona para el efecto por las muchas veras y voluntad que en el e visto el tiempo que aqui e estado de asertar a seruir a vuestra magestad en esta impresa con muchas mas ventajas que otros muchos que para seruir a vuestra magestad en este caso se pueden ofreger y por lo que en sant agustin me an informado.

Como es de la mucha disciplina militar con que tiene inpuestos y bien disciplinados los soldados deste presidio. Auer fortificado esta fuerça de vuestra magestad dando muestras de que esta muy adelante en materia de fortificaciones y puesto la en defensa para poder tener nombre de tal que para su Capaçidad y en su tanto conforme A lo que la tierra pide esta lo que se puede desear y los cuerpos de guardia muy de otra suerte Segun se dize que antes estauan Auer reducido las Prouinçias la

vuelta del Sur hasta las bocas de Miguel mora a la Ouidienciã de vuestra magestad La presa que por su industria y fuersa de aqueste presidio en esta costa Se tomo de françeses de que vuestra magestad entiendo esta ya informado. La qual fue de mucha consideraciõ porque viendo los yndios destas Prouinciãs que los nuestros auian venzido a los enemigos Les a parecido que no ay naçion que pueda mas que la española y ansi temen este presidio mucho mas que de antes. Lo quall es fuersa a meterse por las puertas de los Españoles profesando su amistad, tener la gente de guerra en la ouidienciã con justo respeto de que las merçedes que de algunos dias a esta parte an reçeuido do vuestra magestad entienden an sido echas apetiçion de su gouernador y capitan general Pedro de Ybarra, la traza que en la disposiciõ de las cosas y casos de guerra y soldadesca tiene que siendo en numero pocos los soldados de seruiciõ deste presidio por ser muchos impedidos y otros viejos y estar algunas plazas Ocupadas con saçerdotes y religiosos, da a entender conforme a la ostentaciõ y rostro que a estas Prouinciãs y a los enemigos que se Ofrecen por la mar haze que tiene aun mas del numero mucho de las treçientas plazas que vuestra magestad manda que aya, vsando de ardidess y trazas para conservase en esta opinion en el meter de las guardias y inbiar algunos soldados La tierra Adentro y otras diligenciãs de que se aprouecha a la usança de flandes segun dicen los soldados dispuestas conforme a lo de aca, y ansi al real seruiciõ de vuestra magestad conbendria mucho mandar se pongan los medios neçesarios que a vuestra magestad se le an pedido en su tiempo sin los quales no se podra conseguir este intento.

#### 6. Florida.

Alega el obispo quanto conbiene que se haga esta entrada y conquista dando para ello las raçones y causas.

Yo me E procurado con çelo del seruicio de Dios primeramente y de vuestra magestad ynformar por muchas vias de lo que se puede esperar de aquesta entrada pretensa y E hallado por mi cuenta que conuiene a la real grandeza de vuestra magestad el atender estas reales columnas que pues se dize tanto desta tierra adentro

que a llegado la voz a oidos de françia y de inglaterra y se apretendido como a vuestra magestad aqui me an certificado le consta poner las columnas de francia en donde es justo se ensanchen las de vuestra magestad de creer es debe de ser mucho

o algo lo que ay y aunque no fuera otro el interes que desta entrada se podia sacar sino sauer de veras y de una vez lo que ay pareçe ser digna esta impresa de un Rey tan catolico como vuestra magestad Lo es por el seguro çierto destos yndios que ay actualmente catolicos y de los españoles que aqui siruen los quales tendrian con esto Las espaldas seguras en caso de neçesidad o estarian

Que se le agradeza mucho el auer ydo a la florida y hecho la visita y lo demas que dize y que en quanto a la entrada que dize la tierra adentro a descubrir que no conuiene que desaparezca su yglesia si no que se este en ella.

çiertos de su poco seguro a vuestra magestad conforme me a çertificado el gouernador Pedro de Ybarra cuesta Esto muy poco por ser Viaxe de tres meses el descubrimiento y poder los soldados que se lleuasen sacarse deste presidio por tiempo de hybierno quando no ay temor de enemigos por la mar y en el viaxe los soldados podrian gastar poco mas de lo que gastaran en el presidio que esta Es la traza que el gouernador de vuestra magestad me a comunicado tiene, quanto mas que desta entrada y descubrimiento podra estar çierto vuestro magestad que se puede seguir gran estençion en la fee. y aumento de fieles lo qual todo es ganar vuestra magestad almas para el çielo y obligarnos Vuestra Magestad a sus seruidores que digamos lo que al seruiciõ de vuestra magestad conuiene hazer en esta tierra no auiendo de por medio esta pretençion dicha.

En razon de lo que en esta materia muchos me an dicho y me an afirmado como Vera vuestra magestad en particular por una relacion que Va con Esta de los oficiales reales condequendiendo con la peticion arriua dicha del dicho gouernador y capitan general por vuestra magestad Pedro de Ybarra me detendre algun tiempo el que baste para Esperar la Resolucion que de vuestra magestad por horas me dizen aqui se aguarda.

#### 7. Florida.

Ofrecese el obispo a servir a vuestra magestad a su costa en el descubrimiento que se pretende y a dicho de estas Prouincias mandandole vuestra magestad venir de la ysla de cuba si se vbiere ido de la florida cuando llegaren los despachos de vuestra magestad para el efecto y conuinire al real seruicio de vuestra magestad que venga en la forma que mas al real seruicio conuenga.

Mi deseo es asertar A servir a vuestra magestad y que se ofresca ocasion donde muestre esta voluntad si esta dicha fuere ocasion bastante y a vuestra magestad le pareciere conuiene a su real seruicio que yo me halle En ella desde luego me ofresco y cuando caso sea que los recaudos de vuestra magestad vengan y no me hallen aqui en santagustin estare sin falta prestandome Dios la vida y dandome buen viaxe en la ysla de cuba de donde mandandome vuestra magestad bendre con mucha Voluntad dentro de ocho o diez dias con mi persona casa y hazienda trayendo conmigo Algunas cosas, que se seran de provecho para la jornada como es abundancia de carne y algunos caballos que por ser la tierra adentro segun me an informado llana serian de mucha consideracion enpleando mi posible en esto el qual con la persona Ofresco a vuestra magestad para esto y para todo lo demas que al seruicio de vuestra magestad se ofreciere.

8. Da relacion el obispo del portador y pide se informe vuestra magestad del por ser persona de credito.

*No ay que responder.*

El portador desta es el Padre francisco Puebla Prouisor que a sido muchas vezes y visitador en este obispado por mi antecesor y por exerger por mi nombramiento este oficio en la ciudad de santiago de cuba y por sus buenas partes le señale por uno de quatro que puse en aquella catedral conforme a una cedula real que tengo en que me manda vuestra magestad siruan aquella iglesia quatro clerigos benemeritos los que yo pusiere en defeto de no haber persona presentada por vuestra magestad en su real consejo. El qual dara a vuestra magestad entera relacion de las diligencias que serca de aueriguacion desta entrada e hecho en razon de que a vuestra magestad no se le hagan gastos escusados en estos tienpos, es testigo de vista de lo que ha pasado en estas prouincias y pasa en la ysla y ciudad de Cuba y de lo que en estas partes se padece por no tener quien en esa corte de noticia a vuestra magestad de cosas que al seruicio de Dios conuienen y al de vuestra magestad de las quales como persona de credito podra ynformar a vuestra magestad siendo vuestra magestad seruido.

#### 24 F. En san agustin de la florida.—

Pide el obispo a vuestra magestad que los diezmos que valdran quatrocientos ducados se repartan entre los dos clerigos cura y su quojutor capellan de la fuersa y fabrica de la yglesia y hospital y sacristan señalando estipendio congruente a los dos curas y al sacristan y mandando vuestra mages-

En sant Agustin valen los diezmos poco mas de quatrocientos ducados La yglesia parroquial la qual certifico a vuestra magestad es muy buena para ser de madera y tazamanil es pauperrima y tanto que para su fabrica ni aun para vna vela tiene y El hospital que es tambien muy bien acabado no tiene cosa ninguna sino es la limosna que da la pobre gente que espera parar en el. Vuestra magestad se sirua de que los diezmos se repartan de suerte que quepa parte a la fabrica

tad suplir de su real caja lo que de los diezmos les faltare a su estipendio y dejando el derecho a saluo adelante al obispo mesa capitular y escusado pues subiendo los diezmos y auiedo para todos sera justo todos gosemos de los diezmos.

Juntese con lo que el gouernador a escrito en esto y lo proueydo en ello y traigase al consejo.

obligandole al seruicio desta yglesia como de antes hasta que reciba de vuestra magestad la merced que de todos los sacristanes de las parroquiales de la ysla de Cuba reciben.

25. A la camara de los diezmos.  
En san agustin.—

Da la razon el obispo porque no se conuenga lo que piden los padres de sant françisco que es aquel curato.

Juntese con lo que el gouernador a escrito en esto y tambien con lo que los frailes an escrito y traigase al consejo.

que E visto digo que no me atreueria a entregalles aqui el curato sino es que vuestra magestad precisamente me lo mandase pues vn solo religioso me a dado aqui mas que entender para acabar con el que ocupase una doctrina pues vuestra magestad a eso le ynbiaba y auia inconuientes de no hazerllo que todas Las Prouincias juntas y con todo no e sido poderoso a salir con esto ni a componello en razon de las pesadumbres que aqui an tenido estos padres con el gouernador de vuestra magestad de que entiendo el gouernador habra dado a vuestra magestad noticia.

26 F. En sant Agustin.

Da parte el obispo a vuestra magestad como no fue posible acabar con un religioso particular de los que vinieron para las doctrinas que fuese alla lo qual fue causa de gran dis turbio.

Que se de noticia de todo esto al nuevo comisario general, (una rubrica) y entreguese al señor don tomas a quien se cometio.

de la yglesia y al hospital y a los dos curas y beneficiado simple mandando Suplir vuestra magestad Lo que al estipendio destos ministros señalado les faltare de la parte que se les adjudicare de los diezmos y al sacristan que eso fuere pues no se escusa que le aya en esta parroquial. Supplico a vuestra magestad se sirua de que se le señale vn tanto porque el que lo a sido hasta aqui por justia le ha sacado esta çiudad y presidio las ordenes y ansi atento mereçia premio por su trabajo y era auil y suficiente para ser ecleçiatico le ordene

Anme aduertido que estos padres de san francisco an pedido a vuestra magestad este curato y Capellania alegando costumbre por auerle seruido aqui algunos años un padre de su habito se dezir a vuestra magestad que mi antegesor con ser del habito no quiso que religioso fuere aqui curani capellan por algunos inconuientes entre los quales no era el menor seruir quando querian y dejallo quando se les antojaba. Sin que el obispo ni gouernador les pudiese yr a la mano por aprouecharse en semejantes ocasiones quando les pareçe de sus brebas y yo por las cosas

Toda la uisita se acauara con mucho gusto con mucha paz mucha quietud todas Las pesadumbres tuvieran fin con solo un religioso que aqui predicaba algunas veces se fuera a una dotrina y con pedirselo yo a los oficiales reales de vuestra magestad y mandarselo al padre que tenian por presidente no se pudo acabar con el diziendo que era desonor suyo inbiarle a las dotrinas y diziendo que a vuestra magestad se le auian pedido los frailes para eso al cabo a todos nos gasto la cortezia y ami me a forzado a mandar el notario me de Vn testimonio para que vaya con esta el qual suplico a vuestra magestad mande ber probeyendo de remedio para adelante

porque mi intento no es formar queja destes padres sino procurar que vuestra magestad con su poderosa mano remedie lo que yo no E podido con mi poco caudal.

27. Enuiose.

*Las prouinçias de la florida.*

Da noticia a vuestra magestad el obispo de como los padres de sant francisco tienen por opinion que el Pontifice les ha dado la investidura de la juridiccion de lo espiritual y temporal que es causa total para jamas tener paz con los gouernadores si vuestra magestad no manda a cada vno lo que a de hazer.

Estos padres tienen por opinion el papa les ha dado. La investidura destas dotrinas y Prouincias ansi en lo espiritual como en lo temporal por manera que a su cuenta son gouernadores y obispos de sus dotrinas sin que otro que ellos se pueda entremeter en su juridiccion porque la llaman omnimoda De aqui a nasido muchas pesadumbres y nazeran inconuinentes mentres vuestra magestad no mandare declarar lo que es de cada uno y a cada vno perteneçe. Certifico a vuestra magestad que en una dotrina proponiendo yo delante del tesorero de vuestra magestad por la Lengua a los indios La obligacion que tenían

de tener buen coraçon con vuestra magestad vsando destes terminos por ser lenguaje suyo por el poco prouecho que dellos se sacaua y el mucho gasto que vuestra magestad hazia en estas Prouincias por solo que se conseruasen en la fee y que se les enseñase el camino del çielo diziendoles juntamente que por solo este fin me auia mandado vuestra magestad Venir de tan lejos a dalles el Sacramento de la confirmaçion y que por vuestra magestad Venia yo y aquellos padres a dotrinalles y que antes de pasar la platica delante me dixo el religioso de aquel partido estas palabras. Aqui podra vuestra señoria proponer eso pero en las demas dotrinas no se lo consentiran a vuestra señoria los demas religiosos. A lo qual con algun genero de colera el tesorero y yo le respondimos que por el mesmo caso se auia de proponer aquella platica en las casas comunes y en la yglesia con mas veras que hasta alli y ansi lo hizimos en las demas dotrinas aunque no hubo religioso que de alli adelante replicase sobre esto.

28 F. *Las prouinçias de la florida.*

Pide el obispo a vuestra magestad se señale a los religiosos el modo de proceder con los indios.

En descargo de mi conçiencia digo que en la tierra adentro me informo un religioso que la muerte de los religiosos se auia causado por auer castigado a vn casique vn fraile por una flaqueza de topalle con una yndia Siendo el castigo no con la prudenzia que se debia sino con la publicidad

que se pudiese escusar mostrando en esto su poder y ansi vuestra magestad se sirba de acortarle la mano para que no vengan a semejantes excesos y callo otras muchas causas que supe por tocar en el onor de aquel santo habito.

29 F. *Las prouinçias de la florida.*

Representa el obispo a su magestad como testigo de vista los grandes trabajos que pasan los religiosos dotrineros.

El trabajo y miserias que padeçen en las dotrinas es muy grande y es mucho de agradecer a los religiosos que aqui an trabajado el fruto que an hecho en algunas dotrinas que yo E uisto porque sin duda que comen con dolor el pan en ellas pero todo esto se desdora con inbiar los perladados desta religion a estas partes algunos religiosos

moços sin experiençia de trabajos y que les hierbe la sangre Los quales en lugar de seruir a Vuestra magestad y obligar de su parte a que todos pidamos el premio para los demas nos obligan a que no tengamos ojos aun para belles segun se descuidan en sus obligaciones.

30 F. *Las prouinçias de la florida.*

Pide el obispo a vuestra magestad que los religiosos que an de venir a estas Prouinçias no sean moços ni de estas partes sino viejos mas que moços y de españa hechos a trabajos mas humildes que letrados.

doctrinas ni tampoco de nueva España porque estan hechos a aquella grosedad y trato y de aquellos indios mexicanos y ansi se desconsuelan luego en estas Prouinçias y desconsuelan a los que hallan en ellas y uno y otros toman por remedio a uenez hazer por donde los echen dellas.

33 F. *En san agustin de la florida.*

Dize el obispo se padeze por estar serrados los puertos de la ysla de cuba pide a vuestra magestad lo remedie y que de baracoa y el cayo venga carne con la liuertad que hasta aqui.

Lo proueydo en la del go uernador açerca desto.

puerto auuerto para uenir a estas Prouinçias los que uiuan en estos lugares aunque cortos tenian pelo y gustaban de la viuenda y no se hazia falta a la habana aunque ubiese galeones y armadas y agora que con cedulas reales de vuestra magestad aun no se acaua el sacar carne de aquella ysla para estas Prouinçias aca en sant agustin padecen y se quejan los soldados y alla Los pobres estan desmedrados y me fuerzan con cartas a que pida a vuestra magestad el remedio de una parte y de otra.

34 F. *En la florida.*

Pide el obispo a vuestra magestad salgan de aquel presidio los soldados casados ausentes de sus mugeres o que las traigan alli por que por ser presidio no ha querido tratar desto hasta dar parte a vuestra magestad.

Auiesese desto al gouernador para que en aquella conformidad execute el no permitir que dejen los casados estar sin sus mugeres.

En estas Prouinçias los religiosos que conuienen son los que llegan a los quarenta y son mas humilides que letrados criados en esa bondad de España y curtidos en trabajos de su religion auiendo traido la talega como en las ordenes dizen acuestas y ansi en descargo de mi conçiencia digo que vuestra magestad no descarga la conçiencia dejando Venir de España religiosos moços sino es de muy aprobada virtud para dalles a estas

Aqui en Sant agustin E uisto se padeçen grandemente en materia de comida y tanta que aunque para mi plato no ha faltado gloria a Dios en mi casa la gente quitado que unos dias comieron de un poco de carne que conmigo traje para el efecto los demas dias todos son quaresmales con lo que esto topa lo dira a vuestra magestad mejor el portador que yo lo saure escreuir. Lo que puedo asegurar a vuestra magestad es que quando de baracoa y del cayo lugares de Cuba auia

En este presidio E hallado alguna gente casada que a años que no hazen vida con sus mugeres y en razon de ser presidio de vuestra magestad no les he compelido a que traigan sus mugeres por ser pobres soldados o que vayan a hazer vida maridable con sus mugeres por ser algunos de inportancia para el presidio. Lo mesmo hize en el presidio de la habana por el mesmo respecto con algunos soldados. Suplico a vuestra magestad se sirua de que se de orden como no viuan apartados de sus mugeres por la mejor traza que a vuestra magestad le pareçiere pues es seruicio de Dios nuestro señor.

Los soldados deste presidio me an pedido suplique a vuestra magestad sea seruido que pues no tienen plaza a donde poder yr a comprar La comida vuestra magestad



35 F. Suplica a vuestra magestad el obispo mande ver la relacion que va con esta del tesorero real en razon de haber le pedido los soldados ynforme a vuestra magestad en conciencia de lo que justamente piden cerca de la merçed que vuestra magestad les haze.

Informen el gouernador y oficiales.

que vuestra magestad tiene en estas partes y que mereçen toda la merçed que vuestra magestad les ha hecho y la que agora piden mucho mas y esto siento en Dios y en conciencia y todo lo que en esta Carta ba.

37 F. *En sant Agustin.*

Pide el obispo que el cura visente freire de andrada y el capellan del fuerte vuestra magestad les admita a la presentacion conforme al patronazgo real pues estan puestos por el obispo a peticion del dicho gouernador Pedro de ybarra

A la Camara Remitiose.

menos el cura por auer veinte años que lo es no dejara de asertar y ansi vuestra magestad se sirba de hazerle merçed que para venir a estos puestos y dejar lo que en la ysla de Cuba tenia certifico a vuestra magestad que fue menester prometerles mas de lo que quizas aca se pueda cumplir segun E uisto verdad que sea que no solo uno pero aun dos traia para ver y es tanta la pobresa de la tierra que visto no se podian sustentar Los voluere conmigo dejando estos dos clerigos arriba dichos.

38 F. *En san agustin.*

Pide el obispo a vuestra magestad se sirba de mandar darsalario a quien alli enseñe a los hijos de Vezinos la gramatica.

Informe el gouernador y si el capellan del presidio podria hazer esto y que estipendio se le podria dar.

razon de ser nazidos en estas partes y criados con ellos.

Otra cosa no se me ofrece de que dar parte a vuestra magestad por agora a quien suplico que si acaso alguna merçed mas de la que

40 F. Pide a vuestra magestad el obispo que auendolo de ocupar en el seruiçio de vuestra magestad sea en tierra firme.

A la camara.

de la santa fe catolica fecha en sant agustin de la florida a 24 de Junio de 1606 años.  
Menor capellan de vuestra magestad.

por ser el Presidio Serrado se a de seruir de darles los bastimentos aqui al costo y costas que vuestra magestad tambien se sirua de que no sean a su costa las mermas de los dichos soldados y por enterar a vuestra magestad mas y en razon de auerseme puesto en conciencia pedi a los oficiales reales deste presidio me diesen una relacion que es la que va con esta.

Lo que puedo dezir con verdad que son los soldados mas humildes mas bien mandados mas pobres y para mas que hay en toda la soldadesca

Yo traje conmigo dos clerigos a mi costa para que el vno ocupase el lugar del Padre Ricardo cura que aqui murio y el otro para que enseñase a muchos hijos de vecinos que ay aqui en sant agustin y siruiese la fuersa y ayudase al cura y esto a peticion de Pedro de ybarra gouernador y capitan general por vuestra magestad y ansi ocupan estos dos puestos el padre visente freire de andrada y el padre manuel gudiño a años que siruen Curatos y por falta de esperiençia a lo

Obra seria de vuestra magestad el hazer limosna a los criollos que aqui se crian que es cierto son muy abiles y Los crian los padres con mucha sujecion neçesidad de mandar dar orden como uiese aqui un preceptor que leyese porque auiendo ahorraria vuestra magestad de traer religiosos de España y ocuparian estas doctrinas como jente que se auia criado con gajes de rey fuera de que son muy queridos entre los yndios en

\* Juan de las Caezas,  
*Obispo de Cuba.*

(Translation)

A. G. I. 54-3-1. *Simancas, Ecclesiastico, Audicnia de Santo Domingo.—Letters and Despatches of the Bishops of the Island of Cuba Considered in Royal Council from 1539 to 1674*

*Letter of the Bishop of Cuba to His Majesty in Royal Council.—Florida, to His Majesty. . . . —1606.—The Bishop of Cuba, 24 June.—On February 21, 1607.—Considered and Approved.—Bishop of Cuba.*<sup>1</sup>

1. *Island of Cuba.*

Thanks to his Majesty for having sent the royal *armada* to avoid the ransom money; as the *armada* is the sole means to that end.

There is no reply to be given.

Sir: First of all I wish to extend to your Majesty many thanks (and infinite thanks to the Divine Majesty for putting it into your Majesty's heart) for showing us the great favor of commanding the use of your strong hand to drive away the heretical pirates, enemies alike of God our Saviour and your Majesty, who, by gaining the mastery over the harbors and gateways, have so held and occupied all these coasts, ports and seas; since, as I have been told and have learned through letters written me, your Majesty has sent the royal *armada* for that purpose. The *armada*, I hope and pray, will not fail to meet with success; for God is just and will surely take sides in this cause which is His own.

Many and great are the obligations which we chaplains of your Majesty are under to recommend your Majesty to God every day in our prayers and Masses; as, in fact, I and all the clergy of this diocese do. But such a universal benefit as this for these parts is so great that it alone would be a sufficient cause, though there had existed no other, to place this obligation upon us. For, I assure your Majesty that through the royal *armada*, which is the only means of clearing these Indies and their coasts, many lives will be rescued, many *haciendas* restored, and the gates of hell closed to many. For the curse of ransoms has brought on all these and many other evils. Without doubt all these will now cease.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The document is certainly the earliest we have on the Church of the United States from the pen of any bishop who ever saw the country. Thus, apart from the reverence due it because of its age of more than three centuries, and apart from its great intrinsic value to the historian, it must possess a unique attraction for one interested in Catholic literature on the United States. As far as we have been able to ascertain, this is the first time the document has ever been published in any language. For the historical setting of the document, as also for the life of its writer, the Right Rev. John de las Cabezas de Altamirano, the reader is referred to the article on Bishop de las Cabezas published on pages 400—414 of this issue of the CATHOLIC HISTORICAL REVIEW. It is there shown conclusively that this prelate was the first bishop who ever trod the soil of our great American republic.

<sup>2</sup> The commerce between the islands of the West Indies themselves, and between them and Spain, had long been a rich prey for English and French pirates. The victims of these freebooters had frequently to pay heavy ransoms for their lives. From 1602 to 1604 the Spaniards in the West Indies scarcely dared to venture on the high seas. Their coast towns and seaside settlements were repeatedly sacked and burned by buccaneers. The vessels on which Pedro de Ybarra, Governor of Florida, came to America (about 1603), were captured and appropriated by Gilbert Giron, a French corsair and the passengers robbed, stripped of their clothing and placed in an isolated place on the coast of Cuba.

#### 2 F. Provinces of Florida.

The Bishop reports his arrival in Florida to your Majesty; how he wrote, via Havana, soon after his arrival at St. Augustine, why he hastened his visitation, and the good reception accorded him by the Governor, the City and the Presidio.

Shortly after I reached this place, which was in the middle of March and during Lent, I wrote your Majesty about my arrival in these provinces. My letter was sent via Havana on a vessel which sailed from here for that port, and which I understood would overtake the fleet. I told you why I had hastened my coming, deferring several matters which it was the duty of my office to attend to—especially the provincial synod that was scheduled to be held in Espiritu Santo, a

city in the center of the Island of Cuba, and of which this whole diocese stands in great need, as such a synod has never been held in it. This has been the cause of there not being either a *modus vivendi* or a reform of life and customs, whether among the clergy or the laity, in default of synodical constitutions which are the norm of right-living in that which regards the spiritual or things pertaining to the spiritual. At the same time I gave an account of the promptness with which your Majesty's Governor and Captain General, Pedro de Ybarra, executed on his part (and commanded that the same be done on the part of the City and Presidio, as he had done wholly and to the letter) the royal *cedula* which I brought with me, and by which your Majesty commanded that I should be received in these parts as their Prelate; and that in the functions and performance of my office I should be given all necessary support and assistance.

#### 3. Florida.

The Bishop requests that your Majesty order his visitation be considered in royal council.

In regard to my visitation and office I have lost no time, as your Majesty will see from the testimony which accompanies this letter, and to which I refer you, supplicating your Majesty to have the goodness to command it to be considered in royal council, whose business it is to submit

the labors, expenditures and perils I have undergone, and the loss of health I have suffered, by reason of my visitation. It is just that these things should be known to your Majesty. Then they will tend to a reward in this life for past labors, and for those which I may still accomplish on my return; while I hope, above all things, for a recompense from God in the life that is to come.

#### 4. Florida.

The Bishop gives notice to your Majesty of how he [the Governor] showed him the royal *cedula* for going into the interior, and in virtue of this requested him to accompany the expedition.

Your Majesty's Governor here, Pedro de Ybarra, showed me a royal *cedula*, by which your Majesty grants him license to make an expedition into the interior. And, as your Majesty charges that the Indians shall receive no injury and that they shall be well treated by him, he has requested me to go with him on this expedition that thereby he may be able to give a better account of the exact fulfilment of your royal orders in this

matter, and at the same time to inform you of the need he may have of laborers when the discovery of this vineyard of the Lord which your Majesty claims, has been achieved.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Many of the royal *cedulas*, like this document, show the anxiety of the kings of Spain to protect the American Indians and to convert them to Christianity. In this desire they were zealously supported by the Catholic missionaries. But the *conquistadores*, ever afire for further conquest and bent on amassing gold and silver, too frequently annulled the efforts of the Spanish monarchs and missionaries for good. In justice to the invaders, however, it must be remembered that government by soldiers, to whatever nation they belonged, has never been characterized by any notable display of humanity.

## 5. Florida.

The Bishop says he thinks it very expedient that the proposed expedition into these provinces should be conducted by Pedro de Ybarra (that there may be no delay), both because said Pedro de Ybarra is well informed concerning the interior, and because practice and experience in military science are necessary for success in this undertaking. The Bishop alleges as a reason for his opinion what he has heard at St. Augustine.

Of the person whom your Majesty has selected to make this expedition, the aforesaid Pedro de Ybarra, your Majesty's Governor and Captain General in these provinces, I can say and certify to your Majesty that the choice of him for that purpose has been very fortunate. This I can do because of the great earnestness and good will I have noticed in him, since I have been here, to serve your Majesty in this enterprise. Much more may be expected of him than could be expected of many others who might offer to serve your Majesty in this affair. I can also assert the same thing because of what I have heard at Saint Augustine.

That is, he is a man of great military ability and keeps the soldiers of this presidio under subjection and in splendid discipline. The way he has strengthened your Majesty's fort here gives evidence of his being quite skilled in making fortifications. He has placed the fort in such a state of defense that it enjoys a reputation in keeping with its size and importance, is such as the country demands, and is all that can be desired. The guard-rooms, I am told, are quite different from what they were formerly. He has, moreover, reduced to the obedience of your Majesty the provinces that lie to the south as far up as the mouths of the Miguel Mora.<sup>4</sup> The capture of the French on this coast, of which I understand your Majesty has been informed, was the result of his skill and the strength of this fortress. This was of great moment; for the Indians of these provinces, seeing that our soldiers have overcome our enemies, believe that there is no nation more powerful than the Spanish, and therefore fear this presidio much more than they did in the past. This makes them come to the doors of the Spaniards, professing their friendship, and serves to hold the warlike nation in obedience. With regard to the favors which they received here from your Majesty some days ago, they understand that they were granted at the request of your Governor and Captain General, Pedro de Ybarra. Although but a small number of the soldiers in this garrison are fit for service, as many are disabled and others old, and priests and religious dwell in some parts of the barracks, De Ybarra, by cunning and scheming, has managed to give his situation an appearance that causes both the inhabitants of these provinces and the enemies who appear at sea, to believe that he has many more than the three hundred active men of war whom your Majesty commands to be held here. To maintain this idea he employs stratagems and schemes, such as stationing guards, sending soldiers into the interior and other similar activities, of which he avails himself after the fashion of Flanders (as the soldiers say)—all arranged in a way to suit this place and situation. Thus it would be greatly to your Majesty's own interest, to order that those necessary means be supplied for which he asked some time ago; for without these it will be impossible to accomplish your design.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> By the mouths of the Miguel Mora is probably meant the entrance of the Chesapeake Bay. For Spanish efforts at settlement on the Chesapeake, see SHEA, *The Catholic Church in Colonial Days*, pp. 104ff., and Lowery, *The Spanish Settlements in the United States, 1562-1574*, *passim*.

<sup>5</sup> Pedro de Ybarra became Governor of Florida about 1603. He was succeeded in that position, late in 1609 or early in 1610, by Don Juan Fernandez de Olivera.

## 6. Florida.

The Bishop tells how expedient it is to make this expedition and conquest, and gives the reasons and motives therefor.

interior of this country that even France and England have heard of its greatness; and the intention is—of which, I am told, your Majesty has been informed—to send French troops here. Hence, it is but just that those of your Majesty should be increased. This rumor may be believed or not. But, even should no other good be

Resolved that the Bishop's going to Florida, his visitation, his remarks in regard to the expedition into the interior for discovery, and the other things he says, are highly pleasing; but that it is not expedient for him to relinquish his diocese although he should not remain in it.

derived from the expedition than to learn at once and with certainty what advantages the country may offer, the enterprise seems worthy of so Catholic a King as your Majesty. It will be for the protection of those Indians who are actually Catholics, and for that of the Spaniards in service here. With reinforcements, the soldiers on the expedition could leave the forts behind protected, and in case of necessity, could feel sure of a little assistance. According to what the Governor, Pedro de Ybarra, has assured me, the discovery, because involving a march of no more than three months, will cost your Majesty very little. The forces engaged in it can absent themselves from the presidio during the winter, when there is no fear of enemies from the sea. The expenses of maintaining the soldiers, while on the expedition, may be somewhat more than it costs to keep them when they are in garrison. Such is the plan which your Majesty's Governor has communicated to me. He believes, moreover, that your Majesty may rest assured that this expedition and discovery will conduce greatly to the spread of the faith and the increase of the faithful. In this way your Majesty will gain souls for heaven; and this obliges Us, your Majesty's servant, to declare what We believe to be to your Majesty's honor and service. To pretend to do anything in this country without means and assistance were mere boast.

Because of what many have said and declared to me in regard to this matter, as your Majesty will see—especially from a report which the royal officials, yielding to the aforementioned petition of the said Pedro de Ybarra, your Majesty's Governor and Captain General, send along with this letter, I shall stay here for some time.<sup>6</sup> But I shall remain only long enough to await your Majesty's resolution, which, I am told, is expected almost any time.

## 7. Florida.

The Bishop offers himself at his own cost for the service of your Majesty in the proposed discovery. He says that, in case your Majesty commands him to return from Cuba, should he have left Florida when your Majesty's dispatches to that effect arrive, and it should be advantageous to the service of your Majesty, he will go back in a way most useful to the King's welfare.

Primarily through zeal to serve God and your Majesty I have in many ways procured information as to what may be expected from this proposed expedition. And in my investigations I have learned that it would be well for the royal greatness of your Majesty to be mindful of these Spanish troops. For so much is said of the

My desire is to be able to be of service to your Majesty, and to have an opportunity of showing my good will. If, indeed, the present occasion be such, and your Majesty deems it advantageous to the royal service that I remain here, I offer myself here and now. Should your Majesty's provisions not find me here at Saint Augustine on their arrival, I shall be without fail—God granting me life and a safe journey—in the Island of Cuba. From there I shall most willingly return, should your Majesty command me, within eight or ten

<sup>6</sup> The two documents referred to here are likely letters of Governor de Ybarra and Diego Davila (the royal notary) to Philip III. Both bear the same date as this document (June 24, 1606), and may be seen in Vol. v of the Lowery Transcripts—arranged chronologically. Congressional Library, Washington, D. C.

days after notice, and bring with me my household and chattels. Besides these, I shall bring along a few other things, such as an abundance of provisions and a few horses. The horses, as I am told that the inland is level, will be of great help. All these things I will purchase with what means I have. And all this, as well as my person, I place at the disposal of your Majesty for this purpose, or for whatever else may be of service to your Majesty.

8. The Bishop recommends the bearer of this letter, and begs your Majesty to seek information from him, for he is a reliable man.

There is no reply to be made.

The bearer of this letter is Father Francis Puebla, who was several times ecclesiastical judge and visitor of this diocese under my predecessor. As, by my appointment, he now exercises this office in the city of Santiago de Cuba, and is an able man, I chose him as one of the four priests to officiate in the Cathedral there in compliance with the royal letters which I received, and in which your Majesty bade me to place so many worthy clergymen in the service of that Church. In default of your Majesty's proposing any one for that place through the royal council, I chose the four clergymen on my own accord. Father Puebla will give your Majesty a full and complete account of the pains I took in my investigation of the proposed expedition, that your Majesty may not be put to any unnecessary expenses at this time. He is an eye-witness of what has passed in these provinces and of what is passing in the Island and City of Cuba, as also of what these countries suffer because they have no one at Court to make known to your Majesty the things that would conduce to the service of God and to that of your Majesty. On all this Father Puebla, because a man of reliability, can give your Majesty whatever information you may desire.

24 F. At Saint Augustine, Florida.—

The Bishop requests your Majesty to order that the tithes, which may amount to four hundred ducats, be divided between the two parish priests and their assistant chaplain at the fort, and between the church building, the hospital, and the sacristan. He, furthermore, asks the King to designate a suitable salary for the two parish priests and the sacristan; and suggests that your Majesty order the deficiency in the tithes for their salary to be supplied from the royal exchequer, leaving the episcopal claims to the bishop and the capitular table untouched and exempted for the future—for, he says, as the tithes are increasing, and there is something for all, it is but just that we all enjoy them.

Let this be joined to what the Governor has written thereon, and to the proviso thereupon, and placed before the Council.

At Saint Augustine the tithes amount to a little more than four hundred ducats. The parochial church, I assure your Majesty, is very good to be of wood and boards (*tazamanil* ? *tajamanil*). But it is extremely poor; so poor, indeed, that it has not funds enough to buy a candle. The hospital, which is also very well built has nothing except the alms of the poor who expect to be taken care of in it. May your Majesty be so good as to divide the tithes in such a way that a part of them will go to the church building, a part to the hospital, a part to the two parish priests, and a part to the curate. But may your Majesty be pleased to supply [from the royal exchequer] whatever may be lacking in the salaries of these ministers from the portion of the tithes allotted to them. A portion of the tithes should also be set aside for a sacristan, as this parochial church cannot be without one. I beg your Majesty to have the further goodness to assign a salary to the man who has been sacristan here up to the present. This city and presidio very justly requested orders for him; and for this reason, as also because he deserves some reward for his labors, is intelligent and fit for

orders, I ordained him, binding him to the service of this church as before until he receives from your Majesty the salary received by all the sacristans of the parishes in the Island of Cuba.<sup>7</sup>

25. The Department of Tithes.  
At Saint Augustine.

The Bishop tells why it is not expedient to grant the Franciscans what they ask; that is, the charge of the parish.

Let this be annexed to what the Governor has written thereon, as also to what the friars have communicated, and placed before the council.

such occasions they alleged, as it suited them, their privileges of exemption. For my part, because of what I have seen, I declare that I would not venture to entrust this parish to them, unless your Majesty positively commands me to do so.<sup>8</sup> One religious alone has given me more trouble here than all the provinces put together. He insisted on having a rectorship, in spite of difficulties that stood in the way. I had, finally, to grant his request, as your Majesty sent him here for that purpose. But, even as yet, I have not been able to come to an understanding with him, on account of the difficulties which these friars have had with your Majesty's Governor. I understand the Governor has made this matter known to your Majesty.

26 F. At Saint Augustine.

The Bishop tells your Majesty how it was not possible to come to an understanding with one of the religious who came here to take charge of the Indian missions. He has been the cause of great disturbance.

Notice of all this must be given to the new Commissary General and it must be put into the hands of Don Tomas, to whom this business has been committed.

I have been notified that the Franciscan Fathers have petitioned your Majesty for this rectorship and chaplaincy, basing their claim on custom, as one of their Order served here in these capacities for some years. I can only tell your Majesty that my predecessor, although he belonged to that Order, did not wish a religious to be parish priest or chaplain here on account of some difficulties, of which not the least was that they labored when they wished, and went away when they so desired. Neither the Bishop nor the Governor could call them for duty, for on

The visitation, as a whole, will end with much satisfaction, peace and tranquility. All the troubles would cease, but for one single religious, who was wont to preach here, and whom I attempted to put him in charge of an Indian mission. Indeed, I solicited such a place for him from your Majesty's royal officials, and even sent him to the superior of the friars. Nevertheless, we could not get him to accept the offer, as he declared that such a position was humiliating to him, although we told him your Majesty sent the fathers here to take care of the Indian parishes. At last he wore out the patience of us all, and I have been obliged to require the notary to give me a testimonial. I send it with this

<sup>7</sup> This was certainly the first time orders were ever conferred in the present territory on the United States. They were minor orders, and were given during the Holy Week of 1606. It is probable that, besides the sacristan at St. Augustine, some Franciscan students may have received the same orders on this occasion. Davila's letter referred to in the preceding note shows that the holy oils were also consecrated on this occasion. This, too, was the first time such a ceremony was ever performed in what is now a part of the great American republic.

<sup>8</sup> The Bishop is speaking here of the canonical parish at St. Augustine, which was the principal parish in Florida, was attended perhaps only by the whites or Spaniards, and was generally under the charge of a secular priest. The rector of this parish seems ordinarily to have had an assistant whose duty it was to look after the spiritual interests of the soldiers in the *presidio*. The Indian parishes or missions were all under the care of the Franciscans. Cabezas now begins to be rather severe in his strictures on these fathers. But the glorious work of these missionaries in Florida leads us to believe that these censures were largely the result of misunderstandings; and that they were probably written somewhat under the influence of Governor de Ybarra, who was evidently not friendly disposed towards the Franciscans.

letter.<sup>9</sup> I beg your Majesty to have it considered, that a remedy may be provided for the future. For my purpose is not to complain of these fathers, but to have your Majesty to remedy with your strong hand that which I, with my limited power, have been unable to remedy.

27. It has been sent.

The Provinces of Florida.

The Bishop informs your Majesty of how the Franciscan Fathers are of opinion that the Holy Father has invested them with jurisdiction in both temporals and spirituals. This has been the whole cause of their never being at peace with the Governors. May your Majesty assign to each and every one that which it belongs to his office to do.

Have this sent to the Council for a decision.

These fathers are of the opinion that the Pope has given them the right of investiture with these Indian missions and provinces, so that, to their way of thinking, they are Governors and Bishops of their parishes; and no one, except their religious superiors, can interfere with their jurisdiction—for they call it absolute. From this have arisen many disturbances, and difficulties will continue to arise as long as your Majesty does not declare what belongs and pertains to each and every one. I declare to your Majesty that the following happened, in the presence of your Majesty's treasurer, at one of the Indian parishes I visited. I explained to the Indians

in their tongue that it was their duty to keep a good heart with your Majesty—using the expression because it is in their own language—as little benefit is derived from them, while your Majesty is under great expenditures in these provinces solely to keep them in the faith and to teach them the road to heaven. At the same time I told them that it was for this one purpose that your Majesty had commanded me to come from afar to give them the sacrament of confirmation;<sup>10</sup> and that it was through your Majesty that I and the fathers with me had come to instruct them. But before I left the place, the religious in charge said to me: Your Lordship may say this here; but in the other Indian parishes the religious will not consent to your Lordship's repeating these words. To this the treasurer and myself replied, with some show of anger, that for the same reasons the same things would be said in the other religious houses and in the church with even greater earnestness than here. This we have done in the rest of those parishes; but to the present no religious has made any objection.

28 F. The Provinces of Florida.

The Bishop begs your Majesty to point out to the religious the manner of treating the Indians.

Let this be placed before the Council.

To ease my conscience I will tell that, when I was in the interior, a religious informed me that the death of the friars was caused by the chastisement of a casique by one of the religious. To show his power the friar, instead of administering the punishment with the proper prudence, gave it with a publicity that was not necessary.<sup>11</sup> For

<sup>9</sup> See footnote 6. This priest appears to have been a Father Calaya, a native of Aragon, who was sent away from Florida in 1607.

<sup>10</sup> Diego Davila's letter to Philip III, referred to in note 6, tells us that Bishop de las Cabezas confirmed 2,444 persons in Florida; and that of these 2,074 were Indians, while 370 were whites or Spaniards. This was certainly the first time the sacrament of confirmation was ever administered in the present limits of the United States.

<sup>11</sup> SHEA gives the story of the murder of these fathers in the *Catholic Church in Colonial Days*, pp. 153-155.



this reason, your Majesty will be pleased to shorten his hand that these fathers may not commit any other such excesses. I will pass over many other things that I know, because the honor due that holy habit is thereby concerned.

29 F. The Provinces of Florida.

The Bishop, as an eye-witness, tells your Majesty of the great hardships of the religious in charge of the Indian parishes.

Let this be placed before the Council.

The labors and hardships of the fathers in their parishes are indeed very great; and it is much to their credit to have produced the fruits that I have seen in several of their charges here. Beyond a doubt they eat their bread in sorrow in these places. But all this is tarnished by the superiors of the Order sending to these parts religious who are young, hot tempered and not hardened to toil. These, instead of serving your

Majesty and obliging us all to invoke a blessing upon the others, rather prevent us, by their neglect of duty, from seeing the things that are good.

30 F. The Provinces of Florida.

The Bishop begs that the religious sent to these provinces should not be young, nor of these parts. They should be rather old than young, and from Spain; they should be trained to labor and rather humble than learned.

Let this be placed before the Council.

The religious suited to these provinces are those who have reached the age of forty, and are rather humble than learned—those who have been brought up in Spanish goodness and piety, trained in the austerities of their institute, and have, to use the expression common in the Orders, trampled worldly wealth under foot. I feel in conscience bound to say to your Majesty that you cannot conscientiously permit young religious to come from Spain to labor in these Indian parishes, unless they are men of highly approved virtue.

Nor should you allow missionaries to come here from New Spain; for these latter having grown accustomed to the coarseness and vulgar manners of the Mexican Indians, become dissatisfied soon after their arrival in these provinces, and spread their dissatisfaction among the missionaries they find here. The result is that both the one and the other at times designedly act in such a way as to cause their removal.

Here at Saint Augustine, as I have seen, the people suffer greatly for want of food. Although, thank God, my table has not failed, my household abstain, that on a few days they may eat a little meat which I brought with me for that purpose, all the other days are Lenten. The bearer of this letter can tell you better than I can write to what extent this is true. But I can assure your Majesty that, when the ports of Baracoa and Cayo, Cuba, had free access to these provinces, the people of Florida, while they were poor, had

33 F. At Saint Augustine, Florida.

The Bishop declares that suffering is caused by closing the ports of the Island of Cuba, and begs your Majesty to remedy this by permitting provisions to be brought from Baracoa and Cayo as in the past.

It is provided for in the letter of the Governor on the subject.

some business and could enjoy life. No harm was thus done to Havana, although that place had its galleons and *armadas*. But now, though, in spite of your royal *cedulas*, transportation of provisions from that island to these provinces has not ceased, the people here at Saint Augustine suffer, and the soldiers complain; while the poor in Cuba are made poorer. On all sides they urge me by their letters to solicit a remedy from your Majesty.

## 34 F. In Florida.

The Bishop requests your Majesty to see that the soldiers living apart from their wives either leave the presidio, or bring their wives here. As the place is a garrison, the Bishop has not attempted to settle this question before giving your Majesty information.

Notice of this must be given the Governor, that, in conformity with this request, soldiers may not be permitted to live apart from their wives.

have no market where they can buy provisions, they have requested me to beg that your Majesty may be pleased to grant them the favor of letting them have

35 F. The Bishop, in compliance with the request of the soldiers, begs your Majesty to order a reading of the royal treasurer's report which accompanies this letter. The Bishop makes it a matter of conscience to inform your Majesty of the justice of the favor which the soldiers solicit.

Let the Governor and the officials give information on this.

them, and much more that which they now solicit; that, in fine, I believe, in God and conscience, all that is contained in this letter.

## 37 F. At Saint Augustine.

The Bishop begs that your Majesty may be pleased to admit the parish priest, Vincent Ferrer de Andrada, and the chaplain of the fort for presentation for royal patronage, since they have been placed in these charges by the Bishop at the request of the Governor, Pedro de Ybarra.

This was remitted to the Department.

In this presidio I found some married men who have not lived with their wives for years. As it was your Majesty's garrison, and these soldiers were poor, I did not oblige them to bring their wives here. Nor did I compel them to go and live with their wives; for some of these soldiers are of importance to the presidio. I did the same, and for the same reason, in regard to some soldiers at the garrison of Havana. I beg your Majesty to make some better arrangements, according as you see fit, so that these soldiers may not be obliged to live apart from their wives. This, as you know, will be to serve God our Master.

As this is a closed presidio and the soldiers have no market where they can buy provisions, they have requested me to beg that your Majesty may be pleased to grant them the favor of letting them have supplies at cost price; and that they may not be charged with their wastes. For your Majesty's better understanding, as also because I made this affair a matter of conscience, I asked the royal officials of this garrison to give me a report. They gave me the one that accompanies this letter.

I can say with truth that the soldiers at Saint Augustine are more humble, more obedient to authority and poorer than any of your Majesty's forces in these parts; that they deserve all the favors your Majesty has bestowed upon

I brought two clergy with me at my own expense, that one of them might take the place of Father Richard, the parish priest who died here, and that the other might teach the boys of Saint Augustine, serve the fort and assist the pastor. This I did at the solicitation of Pedro de Ybarra, your Majesty's Governor and Captain General. Thus these two places are filled by Fathers Vincent Ferrer de Andrada and Manuel Gudiño. As both have attended parishes for some years, they are not wanting in experience. This is especially true of Father Vincent Ferrer de Andrada, for he has held such a position for

twenty years. I, therefore, beg your Majesty to attend to their salaries, for they gave up the posts they held in Cuba to come here. It was necessary to promise them something more than can, perhaps, from what I have seen, be provided here. It is true that I brought both of them along with me as an experiment; but so great is

the poverty of the country that I see they will not be able to support themselves. I shall return alone, leaving the aforementioned clergymen here in Florida.<sup>12</sup>

38 F. At Saint Augustine.

The Bishop begs your Majesty to be so good as to order a salary for some one to teach grammar at this place.

Let the Governor give information as to whether the chaplain of the presidio will be able to do this, and as to what salary he thinks could be given him.

educated in their midst, are much sought after by the Indians.

40 F. The Bishop begs that, if he has to render any further service to your Majesty, this may be done on the continent.

Referred to the Department.

It would be well if your Majesty could make an appropriation for the education of the creoles in this place. They are certainly very intelligent; and the padres teach them, holding them under splendid control. It is imperative to issue a decree ordering the maintenance of a master here to teach; for in this way your Majesty could economize in sending religious from Spain, as those thus educated at the expense of the King could take charge of the Indian missions or parishes. These latter, because natives and

Nothing else suggests itself to me at this time of which I may give your Majesty information. May I ask your Majesty that, should you intend to confer any other favor on me besides the dignity which I now hold, although, I know, unworthily, it may be on the continent; for your Majesty knows from my antecedents how repug-

nant the sea is to me. Meanwhile, may our Lord preserve your Majesty, and confer upon you a yet greater extent of kingdoms and territory for our good and the defense of the holy Catholic faith.

*Done at Saint Augustine, Florida, 24 June, 1606.*

Your Majesty's humble Chaplain,

(Signed) ✱John de las Cabezas,  
*Bishop of Cuba.*

<sup>12</sup> From this letter and the summary of it made by the clerk of the Royal Council of the Indies it is evident that Vincent Ferrer de Andrada and Manuel Godiño were religious; that the first, and not the latter, was appointed pastor at St. Augustine; and that both of them came to Florida with Bishop de las Cabezas in the March of 1606. From this it may be seen that SHEA (*Catholic Church in Colonial Days*, p. 158) is in error when he says: "The vacancy in the parish church was filled, however, on the twentieth of October, 1602, when Don [a title never applied to priests belonging to a Religious Order] Manuel Godiño appears as incumbent, remaining till 1607, assisted for a time by Don Vincent Freire Dandrade." These two clergymen were Portuguese, and were called to Spain in the latter half of 1607, along with all the Portuguese missionaries then serving on the Spanish American missions. We have not been able to learn to what Order they belonged.